



Media Release

8 May 2020

Books still king for Cockburn Libraries members during Covid-19

A plethora of popular digital experiences are on offer at Cockburn Libraries during the COVID-19 isolation period but an indication of what its membership was really missing became obvious on 21 April.

Cockburn Libraries advertised a 10-item Mystery Bag option to members via social media and within 24 hours was inundated with more than 90 requests for a bag of library goodies that could be safely collected from the Success Library loading bay.

Members were also offered a new Reservation Pickup service where they could choose items online from the library catalogue for socially distanced collection between 9am-5pm Monday to Friday at their nearest library branch.

City of Cockburn Library Services Manager Linda Seymour said both options had proven extremely popular, with wonderful feedback from the community.

“Although the library has provided many digital experiences for the community during the Covid-19 restrictions, it was recognised that the physical connection of reading a book is still very important to all our book lovers out there,” Ms Seymour said.

As the pickup service kicked off, it resulted in an immediate 14 per cent spike in reservations with 5,046 items issued from the library collection to date.

The Mystery Bag option was requested by 365 members with 4,038 items out on loan and 375 members borrowed 1,008 items as part of the Reservation Pickup option. Half of the items were from the adult book collection, 32 per cent children’s books and 18 per cent DVDs.

Ardent Cockburn Libraries member Daniel Cain said he and his wife Charlotte visited Success Library once or twice a week and were missing having a natter with staff about the latest book and DVD releases.



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He was excited and relieved to learn about the new Mystery Bag option on the libraries Facebook page.

“I had almost run out of books so it was perfect timing,” Daniel said.

“It really appealed because it offered both a surprise and something new, with books and DVDs I normally wouldn’t choose included in my Mystery Bag. It was refreshing.”

Daniel reads about a book a week, while his wife sometimes reads one a day, with the library service providing most of these resources.

“We often go to a book shop and see what new releases we like and then go the library and get hold of them very quickly, and it’s all free,” he said.

“Compared to the libraries in the UK where I’m originally from, Cockburn Libraries are so well funded and resourced with an incredible variety and lots of new releases.

“I don’t see the point in collecting books anymore. I’m never going to read them again and you can reserve up to 20 items online from the library. It really is a wonderful service.”

But the lifelong reader said the library was more than just a supplier of books.

“We know the librarians by name and just enjoy the community feel there, plus there are a whole lot of activities to get involved with that help you learn about the community. We can’t wait to join in again,” Daniel said.

Some of the libraries popular digital options during the pandemic shutdown included children’s online story times, and a song-writing course, plus a range of online resources from children’s online learning and gaming, English online training, e-magazines for all ages, movie streaming, ebooks and audio books.

Cockburn Libraries has more than 36,000 members. Library items can be returned now at Coolbellup and Spearwood Library, and all library item return dates have been extended until the City’s three libraries reopen.

Find out more at the cockburnlibraries.com.au website.



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